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The Times

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The Polar Express

A young boy looks on as a model train whips round the track during Kinmount's Christmas in the Village. The weekend-long event featured Breakfast with Santa, a holiday market, a tree lighting, and more. For more photos, see inside this issue. /TIM YANO special to the Times

Half of local COVID-19 deaths were in the last few weeks: Bocking

by JAMES MATTHEWS
Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Some people living under the umbrella of the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge

District Health Unit may have gotten tired of frequent talk about respiratory illness season.

But that frequency of message underscores the importance of keeping COVID-19, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus top of

mind, said Dr. Natalie Bocking, the medical officer of health at the Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit.

She gave an overview of respiratory illness season thus far when health board members

met in Cobourg Dec. 7.

Infection rates in much of Ontario is in the moderately higher range compared to last fall when infections happened earlier and

see SICKNESS page 3

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A Christmas miracle for local family

by EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Christmas is a time for giving, a time for kindness, a time for gratitude.

And Lyndsie Fliss understands that wholeheartedly. Fliss and her family recently received \$1000 from Chaulk as a part of their Christmas for Kids giveaway. The giveaway included grocery store, gas, and Visa gift cards, as well as some extra special goodies for each family.

"My family has been through quite a bit this past year," Fliss shared. "It's been a year of pivoting, and we've had to lean on the community whenever we could."

Fliss moved to Haliburton County in the summer of 2021 with her partner, Jay, and their young daughter, Skylar, who has cerebral palsy. Skylar's disability was one of the main reasons Fliss felt that the move to the country was in the cards. "We were so tired of city living," she said, "and I became really worried about safety for Skylar there. But now, she is just treated like such a beautiful human being up here."

Jay was offered a position at Camp Wanakita that summer, and the family jumped at the opportunity. The move gave Fliss the chance to get Skylar prepared for her first years in kindergarten in the new community, and new forms of connection that the family had never experienced in the city.

As they began to make their mark in Haliburton County, Fliss began to have a series of health issues that piled up. At one point, she was kept in the hospital for over 20 days at a time, while Skylar navigated her early days at school, and Jay was between jobs.

While Fliss is still in recovery mode from a particularly scary year, she believes that the kindness of the community is what's kept her and her family afloat. "We would have never felt this kind of love and support if we weren't living in a small town," she said.

Originally hailing from the Hamilton region, this is the first year that the family will



Lyndsie Fliss and Trevor Chaulk smile for a photo when Fliss came to pick up the prize for her family. /Photo submitted

not be returning home for Christmas, based on complications in Fliss's recovery. So it was a breath of fresh air when they found out they were recipients of the Christmas for Kids giveaway. "As much as families try to hold it together this time of year, try to create

that magic for their kids, it can get dark," she said. "But feeling that atmosphere of joy as soon as we walked into Chaulk, wow, it was just so fantastic."

Trevor Chaulk developed the giveaway two years ago, with one bundle of \$1000.

"We wanted to give back to the families in this community who needed a hand," he said. Since then, the project has grown from one prize of \$1000, to five bundles, totalling \$5000, and supporting five different local families.

The concept of the contest was based on community references. Meaning that Chaulk did not seek out families, rather, individual families were nominated from folks in the community. "We had a lot of nominations come in this year," he said, "and people would be nominated without their knowledge, so it would be a surprise if they won. Kind of like a Secret Santa."

Some of the criteria for the contest were factors such as being permanent residents in the county, and a family with children under the age of 18 living in the home. "As a local family run business, we know the last couple of years have been extra difficult and stressful," read the contest post on social media, "If you know a deserving, hardworking family who could use a little extra help this holiday season, please tell us their story."

Chaulk noted that when he and his family first started their own company, there were times they needed to access the local food bank, "and we never forget those roots," he said.

He credits the community as a whole as a primary reason that a contest like this can be run with such success. "When a call goes out for help in this area, this area is excited and eager to help out," he said. "It's all about helping your neighbour out."

And Fliss echoed Chaulk's sentiment. "We have not been in a place this past year to support our community financially," she said, "but showing up in the ways we can, with kindness and support, those are our riches right now."

Fliss shared that by winning the giveaway, it has given her and her family the opportunity to purchase gifts for Skylar for the holidays, as well as stock their fridge and pantry for the season. "This has given us a safety net to move forward from a challenging year," she said, "and their kindness will allow us to pay it forward. We are forever grateful."



Danielsen to continue as warden

Liz Danielsen, the mayor of Algonquin Highlands, was returned to the Haliburton County warden's seat during a special meeting of council Dec. 12. She was chosen by her upper tier council members over Minden Hills Mayor Bob Carter. Danielsen said there are many tough decisions ahead for county council, given the difficult economic times faced by each lower tier municipality and the county. For the full story, see next week's paper. /File photo

Could it be a green Christmas?

by EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

It's been an unusual winter so far, with the biggest blizzard of the year falling on Halloween, and then milder temperatures following. With rain in the forecast for the coming week and uncertainty around whether it will be a white Christmas, the *Times* reached out to the Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) to get some winter predictions for the coming months.

The MNRF utilized the studies completed by the Aviation Forest Fires and Emergency Services (AFFES) to guide their predictions.

While the Pacific Ocean may seem far away, the events happening around it are impacting the temperatures we will be experiencing over the next few weeks. "El Nino ENSO conditions are expected to peak in the next few weeks," reads the report from AFFES. "Current projections show that El Nino will slowly weaken towards spring of 2024 and become neutral for this coming summer."

El Nino refers to above average sea-sur-

face temperatures that periodically develop over the Pacific Ocean, and migrate towards Canada, causing warmer and drier temperatures. "Most of the province was slightly drier than normal for November," said AFFES. It was noted that this will be an "El Nino winter" by the AFFES.

It is predicted that December will bring warmer than normal temperatures for most of the province, and will gradually get cooler towards the end of the month. AFFES noted that a storm track traveling along the southern Great Lakes will bring in this rainfall that we will be experiencing over the next few days, and will turn into sleet and snow a bit later in the month.

As the winter unfolds, there will be a strong variation between "warmer and colder than normal episodes," said AFFES. These sharp juxtapositions in weather will cause a spike in mixed precipitation, and far more severe storms. At this point, it is predicted that February will be presenting significantly colder than normal conditions. The AFFES has identified that the Haliburton Highlands and parts of southeastern Ontario "shows the strongest signal for higher than normal precipitation and potential ice events."

Trillium Lakelands board recognizes staff contributions

by JAMES MATTHEWS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Innovation and adaptability are a teacher's assets in a classroom.

The Trillium Lakelands District School Board recognized those prized qualities in staff members during its Dec. 5 public meeting.

"Innovation is the practice of developing and implementing new and relevant services or systems," said Wes Hahn, the board's education director, in a press release.

"Leadership is a set of behaviours used to help people align collective directions, execute strategic plans, and continually renew and improve an organization."

The school board's new Director's Recognition for Innovation and Leadership Award celebrates individuals who have combined the characteristics of innovation and leadership to advance the goals of improving student learning, achievement, and fostering student and staff well-being.

The award will be presented at each monthly board meeting.

December's recipient is Dwayne Raglin, the board's cyber security and network infrastructure manager.

Raglin has led a small team of dedicated individuals through a thorough review of board cyber security practices and the implementation of innovative solutions.

"Raglin's innovation and leadership has contributed to the establishment of a learning and working environment which is safe, equitable, and open to all, and also promotes excellence in learning outcomes for our students," according to a press release.

Hahn also recognized three individuals with a Canadian Association of Communicators in Education (CACE) BRAVO! Award. They honour exemplary work in all aspects of marketing and engagement, communications, and school public relations each year.

CACE is the only Canada-wide awards

program specifically designed to recognize excellence in school board communications. TLDSB put its work forward in the Communications Project category.

"Communications projects are full, complete projects that have a comprehensive, strategic communications plan with clear evidence of objective project/program evaluation," Hahn said.

TLDSB was presented with an Award of Distinction at the 2023 BRAVO! Awards Gala on Oct. 29.

Congratulations to Carolynne Bull, communications manager, Sinead Fegan, communications officer, and e-learning design technician Bryce Huskison.

Hahn highlighted the recent achievements and other work being done across the system to support the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, including results from the annual parent/guardians fall survey, the creation of mental health champions in every TLDSB school, as well as the recent work of the G7 Student Senate who will be creating supports for student mental health.

Each of the superintendents of learning shared data from their 2022-2023 focus schools with trustees.

Focus schools are identified schools where the administrator and superintendent explore advances that can be made at the school level. The superintendent works alongside the administration and teachers to look at their school data and provide suggestions and resources that they can use to advance student achievement at their school.

Tanya Fraser, acting associate superintendent of learning, shared the Mental Health and Addiction Strategy, which focuses on caring conditions for learning; social emotional learning skills; mental health knowledge; mental health support; and strong service pathways.

Fraser also noted that there was a shift last school year from student success and attendance counsellors (SSACs) to mental health

counsellors, as well as the implementation of a multi-tiered system of support.

Tim Ellis, superintendent of business services, shared updates from Business Services such as the modification in school budgets to reflect local need, carbon neutral changes that have been made, and the opening of the child-care centre at Glen Orchard Public School.

Traci Hubbert, superintendent of human resources services, provided trustees with some highlights from the department that included the work done to reach union agreements and ensuring staff are in schools to support in times of high staff absenteeism.

Jay MacJanet, superintendent of learn-

ing, presented trustees with the Math Achievement Action Plan, which is a directive from the Ministry of Education Bill 98, Better Schools and Students Outcomes Act, 2023.

MacJanet highlighted the three priorities: Ensuring fidelity of curriculum implementation, including the intentional use of proven strategies that support academic math achievement;

Engaging in ongoing leaning on math content knowledge for teaching;

Knowing the math learner, and ensuring math tasks and interventions, and supports are relevant and responsive.

Sickness to peak over holidays

from page 1

more intensely.

"Moderately higher means that our hospitals and emergency departments are seeing an increase and they're feeling that increase in terms of visits for respiratory illness, respiratory infections," Bocking said.

She said that's being driven by a number of viruses and varied age groups of patients being more susceptible to severe illness.

COVID-19 and flu cases are expected to continue to increase over the next three weeks. It's anticipated that the peak of the current COVID-19 wave will happen over the holidays.

As for local COVID-19 activity so far in the 2023-24 respiratory season, there have been 31 outbreaks with 39 hospital admissions and 13 deaths.

The majority of those infections were in patients over the age of 70 years, she said.

"It's certainly impacting people of older age more than other age groups," she said.

There have been 12 lab-confirmed cases of the flu but no hospital admissions. That's expected to change over the next few weeks.

In 2023, there were 31 deaths due to COVID-19. Almost half of that tally happened in the last few weeks.

"When a COVID-19 wave increases, and we are seeing that in the wave right now, then we expect there to be hospital admissions and deaths associated with it, unfortunately," Bocking said.

Now is the time to get a flu shot and a COVID-19 vaccine, she said.

"And that's the message for all ages," she said.

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FIRE DEPARTMENT

Holiday Fire Safety Tips:

- Consider using LED lights and hang with nail-free clips for your outdoor-rated lights. Cut your loss and toss damaged strings – an electrical fire is a sure bet for a lousy holiday.
- Falling needles are your tree's way of telling you it's drying out. Water your tree daily.
- Be wary of heat sources near the tree including furnace vents and non-LED lights.
- Don't "overextend" your outlets! Extension cords are a temporary. Never run extension cords under a rug.
- Fires caused by cooking mostly happen when the stove is left unattended.

WINTER PARKING

From Nov 1st to Apr 30th, overnight parking is prohibited between the hours of midnight and 8:00 AM on township roadways and parking lots. Furthermore, parking in the turning circle of a cul-de-sac is prohibited during all hours. Vehicles parked in these areas that prohibit the removal of snow will be towed away and/or ticketed at the owner's expense.

CULTURAL CENTRE

The Agnes Jamison Gallery is now displaying selections from the permanent collection including new acquisitions by André Lapine ARCA (1866-1952). The Gallery is open to the public Tuesday – Sunday from 10 am – 4 pm. The Gallery will be closed from December 25 to January 1, 2024 for the holidays. For more information, please call 705-286-3763 or email culturalcentre@mindenhills.ca

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MUNICIPAL HOLIDAY HOURS

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Dec 18th to Dec 22nd 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
CLOSED Dec 23rd to Jan 1st

Cultural Centre/Agnes Jamieson Gallery

CLOSED Dec 25th to Jan 1st

Landfills

All Sites are CLOSED Dec 25th & Jan 1st

SG Nesbitt Memorial Arena and Community Centre

Dec 24th CLOSED at 11a.m.
CLOSED Dec 25th, 26th & Jan 1st
Dec 27th Facilities will be open, Office CLOSED

Public Works Department Administration Office

Dec 18th to Dec 22nd 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
CLOSED Dec 23rd to Jan 1st

Fire Department Administration Office

Dec 18th to Dec 22nd 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.
CLOSED Dec 23rd to Jan 1st

Regular hours resume Jan 2, 2024



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NOTICE: PUBLIC MEETING – COMPREHENSIVE FEES AND CHARGES BY-LAW

TAKE NOTICE that the Council of the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills will be holding a Public Meeting on Thursday, December 14, 2023, during its Regular Council Meeting regarding the Comprehensive Fees and Charges By-law.

VIRTUAL & IN-PERSON COUNCIL MEETINGS

Council and Closed Session meetings are currently being conducted with a hybrid model of in-person and electronic participation in accordance with the Municipality Act. Meetings begin at 9:00 AM unless otherwise noted. The scheduled upcoming meeting is:

December 14 - Regular Council Meeting

Members of the Public are invited to observe Council proceedings by attending in-person or a live-stream link available on the Township CivicWeb Portal at mindenhills.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingTypeList.aspx or by using the direct link provided in the notice. Meeting agendas are not displayed during the meeting; please download by visiting our CivicWeb Portal at mindenhills.civicweb.net/Portal/MeetingTypeList.aspx. Please note the live stream file/video will be available to the public for the duration of one week after the Council Meeting.

WASTE DISPOSAL

The holiday season is right around the corner! By making conscious decisions about responsible holiday recycling this festive time of year, you can help reduce your impact on the environment while still enjoying all that comes with the season. We encourage you to reduce, reuse, recycle, and donate where possible. You can recycle the following at the Scotch Line Landfill: Cardboard, paper, and containers recyclables Electronic items, Household batteries, Textiles (clothing, linens, purses etc.) Unwanted reusable lumber, Scrap Metal

Of Sound Body changes hands

by EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

New chapters, new challenges, new changes.

These are all items on the horizon for Tara O’Sullivan and Jacqueline Ziorjen as the well-known Of Sound Body in the heart of downtown Minden officially changes hands. After 30 years in the industry, Ziorjen is taking a step back, and O’Sullivan has become the new owner of the business.

“It feels surreal and exciting,” said O’Sullivan. “It was kind of always the plan in a way. I remember a little over 10 years ago right before I started massage school, Jackie and I went out to Molly’s and dreamed about me moving back home when I was done with school and eventually taking over the practice.”

And now a decade later, that dream is coming true. “When Tara decided to pursue a career in massage therapy needless to say I was thrilled,” said Ziorjen. “I have known her since birth so suffice to say she is like another daughter to me.”

Ziorjen started the business with Barb Wright 30 years ago. She then became the sole proprietor 18 years ago, and has learned many lessons along the way. “I had no previous business skills to own and run my own business,” she said. “I learned through trial and error and in the early years I had to educate the public about massage therapy.”

Ziorjen laughs that she spent many days sitting by the phone, just waiting for it to ring. Now, they receive phone calls weekly with new folks asking to join their extensive roster of clients.



Jacqueline Ziorjen, left, started Of Sound Body 30 years ago, and has officially passed the torch to Tara O’Sullivan as the new owner. /EMILY STONEHOUSE Staff

Of Sound Body offers massage therapy, reflexology, naturopathy, a certified holistic nutritionist, a kinesiologist, and more. It is designed to be a space that can be accessed

and visited by anyone looking to improve their overall health and wellness.

O’Sullivan originally hails from Minden, but spent eight years in Ottawa pursuing a different path, despite knowing early on that she was interested in becoming a registered massage therapist (RMT). “I knew what Jackie did and the thought of getting to work one-on-one with people to help make them feel better really appealed to me,” she said. “I also knew I wanted a career where I could be my own boss and make my own hours.”

“When Tara asked if I would mentor her, I was honoured to help her. From the beginning, I was confident in Tara’s ability; from her touch to her great natured personality,” said Ziorjen.

O’Sullivan started practicing in Minden eight years ago, and she has never looked back. She gives credit to her clients as the reason she genuinely enjoys waking up every day to go to work. “Everyone is so great, and I can truly say that over the years I’ve been doing this I could probably count on one hand the amount of days I’ve said I wish I didn’t have to go to work,” she laughed. “Pretty much every day is a great day when you know you’re going to improve other

people’s day.”

But just because Ziorjen is taking a step back in ownership, she has no plans to fully retire any time soon. She shared that after 30 years, she is happy to come to work and leave at the end of the day, without the added responsibility of management. She refers to working with her clients as “soul food”, and wishes to continue to feed her soul, doing what she loves. “I still love my career and love my clients, so for the time being I will remain part-time and will take it year by year. It has been such a fulfilling career,” she said.

O’Sullivan believes that the honour of owning the business means carrying on the legacy that Ziorjen has created in the community. “I want it to continue to be an easy-going place for practitioners to work out of, and I want it to continue to be a space that clients look forward to coming into,” she said.

As Ziorjen reflected on her decades of experience, she feels hopeful for what the future has in store. “The fact that Tara is the one who has taken over my business is truly a dream come true,” she said. “I could not be more honoured or thrilled. Some days I still have to pinch myself. I literally am leaving the place in good hands.”



Home Game

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Nicotine pouches to be restricted by Health Canada

by JAMES MATTHEWS

Local Journalism Initiative Reporter

Local public health officials were poised to direct to Ottawa their concerns about youth and flavoured nicotine pouches.

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit staff were set to send a letter to Health Canada, advocating for a change in regulations pertaining to the sale of the flavoured nicotine product.

"Essentially, there was a loophole that allowed these nicotine pouches to be sold at non-pharmacies, any location, (to) any aged people," said Dr. Natalie Bocking, the district's medical officer of health.

Zonnic brand nicotine pouches were approved for sale July 18 by Health Canada. The product doesn't contain tobacco and because the pouches contain less than four milligrams of nicotine each and are not inhaled, they didn't fall under any existing federal or provincial tobacco or

vaping legislation.

Bocking said during the unit's meeting Dec. 7 that the federal Health Minister Mark Holland has since acknowledged the problem loophole and that the regulations will be changed.

"They recognize that it's not appropriate," she said. "They're quite concerned about how it happened."

So the letter, which had been written, wasn't sent.

Such is life sometimes.

"Maybe telepathy worked," quipped Bob Crate, the board's Northumberland representative.

"So it's no longer going to be sold in grocery stores," said Cecil Ryall, Haliburton's representative on the board.

"They have to change the regulations, but it should no longer be sold in convenience stores and grocery stores," Bocking said.

Finding our place in history

by BRITNEY PAGLIUCA

Times Staff

Did you know that the Haliburton County Public Library provides free access to Ancestry.com?

That's right. If you log on to the library Wi-Fi, you can access databases that will help you uncover your family's history that would otherwise cost you nearly four hundred dollars a year.

Moreover, you can receive help from a professional genealogist when you attend the library's "Afternoon with Ancestors", led by Adele Espina from the Haliburton Highlands Genealogy Group.

The drop-in program takes place on the first and third Tuesday of each month at 2 p.m. at the Dysart branch and on the second and fourth Tuesday at the Minden branch.

During the session, you will have the opportunity to ask questions about navigating your family's history and to be guided through the multiple databases that are available to you.

"It's like piecing together a historical puzzle," Espina said. "It can be complicated and time-consuming but is often extremely rewarding."

In addition to online databases, Espina also has a wealth of knowledge on local history and access to resources that might be difficult to find, like local cemetery books, year-books, school records, newspaper clippings, and more.

In learning about our family's past, we find an opportunity to foster a deeper sense of self – an understanding of who we are, where we come from, what our ancestors have done, and the trials and triumphs they had to overcome.

"It can be about finding our place in the world and giving meaning to our, and our ancestors, lives," Espina said. "Belonging can be a place, but it is also a feeling and an understanding of our connection to a wider history."

This holiday season, while we spend time with our family or others that we hold dear to our hearts, let us be curious about the origins of the special relationships and places in our

lives. Share stories, ask questions, and take photos – we all go down in history.

The Haliburton County Public Library is truly so much more than a place to check out books. They offer an endless list of services that benefit our community. For more infor-

mation about upcoming events, programs, and resources go to haliburtonlibrary.ca.

When we ask questions, collaborate, and stay curious, the possibilities of what we can learn and achieve are endless.



The band played on

Gord Kidd and Friends played for a full house at the Dominion Hotel on Dec. 9 for their annual Christmas Dinner event. /ADAM FRISK special to the Times

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A Christmas boost

WE'RE IN that time of year where we all need a little boost. Energy is low, prices are high, and infections are steadily climbing.

"'Tis the season" we hear repeatedly. "It's going around" we brush off when there's a tickle in the throat, an unexpected sneeze.

While we have felt drained these past years from the constant talk of COVID-19, boosters, shots, vaccines; the reality of the world is that these things don't just go away. We can't turn our backs on germs.

James Matthews wrote about how COVID-19 is far from gone, with half of the local infection-related deaths having happened just over the past few weeks. The majority of those patients were over 70 years old.

We share a lot of content in this newspaper about people over the age of 70. They make up a huge demographic of our population. So many of the events, concerts, experiences, and volunteer-driven initiatives are run by folks over the age of 70.

But they are of course at a higher risk for infection. So are people with compromised immune systems, who are battling cancer, or who are pregnant.

While I think there's value in not living in a world of fear, now that we have normalized the term "COVID-19", now I believe we have the wherewithal to manage it.

The reason the term sunk down from a doomsday curse to an everyday nod is because a vaccine was created. People began to develop immunizations for the infection based on medicine, facts, and science, and as a result, bodies stopped piling up and the fear began to dwindle.

We stopped looking up daily COVID-19 numbers, and we started

connecting with our friends again. As our knowledge of the virus expanded, so did our bubbles, and before long, things were back to normal. Or whatever new normal we had evolved into.

Normal enough that people were relieved, I suppose.

But we can't forget. As we watch the numbers start to climb again, we can't become numb to those figures.

Because as a reminder, those statistics are somebody's parent, grandparent, friend, mentor.

Particularly in a small town. We know the faces, the names, the stories. And we can't lose sight of that because we're too scared to open our eyes to the reality of COVID-19 once again.

EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

So here we are again. Not necessarily back to the beginning, but living in a limbo of fear and fantasy; trying to look simultaneously forward and backwards with those rose coloured glasses to a time where "COVID-19" was nothing but a wisp in the

wind.

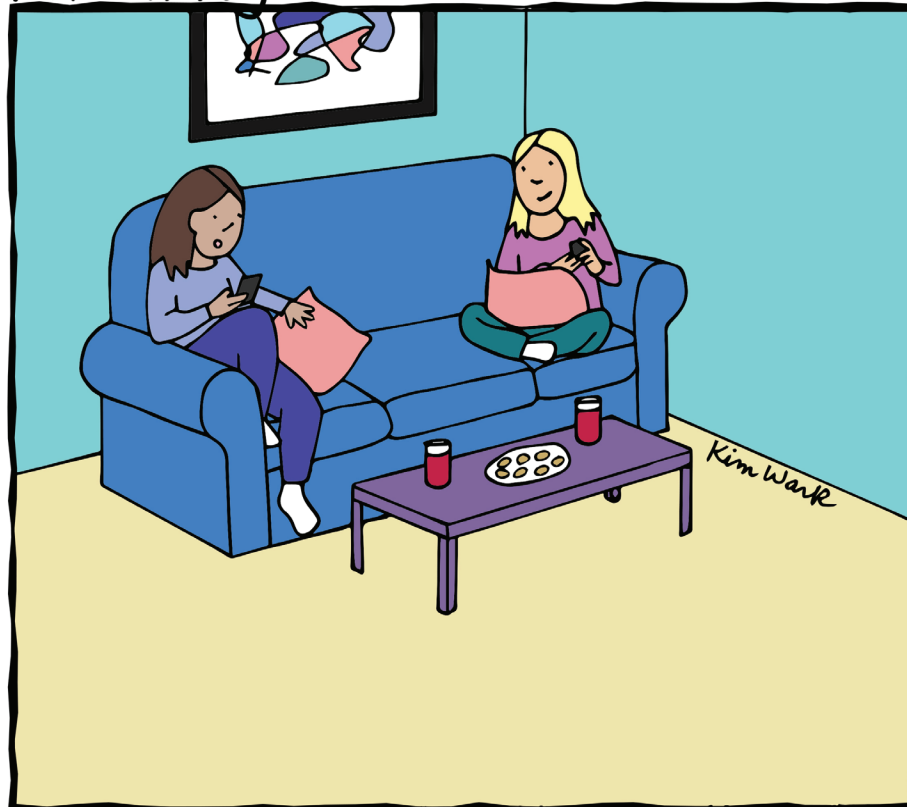
The best thing we can all do is get vaccinated. Flu shots, COVID-19 boosters, whatever you can do, it makes a difference. Not just for yourself, but for the others around you who may still be living in a fear bigger than themselves.

We owe it to our hospital workers, to our immunocompromised friends, to our families, to those people who have become statistics.

This is the time of year when we give back. The time of year that we focus on food banks and toy drives and so many other wonderful things that make us all feel like we're a part of something bigger than ourselves.

And getting a little boost over the holidays is just one more way to say you care about our community.

Kwarky



"I wasn't sure I'd like veganism until I saw how much it inconvenienced my parents."

Missing a few links

ON FRIDAY, my best buddy is coming out to help me butcher and package a deer I have hanging. I don't really need the help all that much. But this annual get together has become a bit of a tradition. And, frankly, the best part of it is at the end. That's when we make a fair bit of deer sausage – which is a process in which you actually need help.

This is something we do almost every year. We make sausage, tell stories of autumn's past, have a drink and nice snacks, and celebrate the hunt. Which is why we naturally refer to it as our annual sausage party.

Frankly, it's a lot of fun. I butcher the deer into steaks, roasts, stewing beef, and burger. Tom packages using my vacuum sealer and then labels the cuts. It's a slick operation and we have a lot of laughs along the way. But, I won't lie, the high point is always when we make sausages.

Yet, despite all the fun we are having, we could use some help. After all, as four guys who specialize in replacing chandelier light bulbs once told me, many hands make light work.

With all the fun we have processing a deer, you'd think it would be easy to get some of our other hunting buddies to come over. Sadly, however, whenever we invite the guys or gals we know to our annual sausage party, they all suddenly have other things to do.

It's not like we don't try to upsell the experience either. Tom has a whole sales pitch about how much fun we have. And I have been known to chime in and let them know that when it comes to sausage par-

ties, the more the merrier.

We don't try to hide our desperation either. We tell them it's getting to be a lot of work for two old guys, and tell them things would go a lot better for everyone if we had another grinder or two.

Sadly, the direct approach doesn't seem to work with our friends.

Which is a shame, because really, it's not like we are asking a lot. Heck, we've even told them that we'd reciprocate and be happy to participate in any sausage parties they throw. That's when they act as if they never have any.

Of course, this is untrue. Everyone knows our friend Bill makes wonderful venison sausages every year. And Johnny's bear sausages are the talk of the town. So, it's no wonder they seem nervous when they look us in the eyes and deny they have sausage parties of their own.

I get it. Sausage parties aren't for everyone. But this is not your granddad's sausage party. These days we don latex gloves and buy waterproof drop sheets to make sure clean up is easy.

In any case, our friends who hunt are not interested in attending at all.

Fortunately, this couple we met when we were at the grocery store getting supplies, overheard us lament about the poor attendance of our upcoming sausage party. And, after hearing Tom's sales pitch, Clementine and Dexter said they were very curious and wondered if they could swing by. We told them we would welcome their participation. Funny thing is, I could have sworn they told us they were vegetarians ...

STEVE GALEA
Beyond 35

IN OTHER WORDS

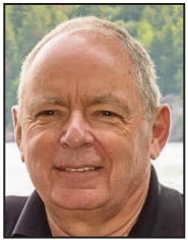
Columns and Letters to the Editor

Mysteries with a bonus

WE TEND to think of global warming and climate change as some new development, It's not. There have been warnings about it going back many decades.

You find the warnings in the oddest places. I'm reading John D. MacDonald's *A Fearful Yellow Eye*, his eighth novel in the Travis McGee crime series, and find this passage:

"I could smell a sourness in the wind. I remembered that it blew across a dying lake. For a hundred years the cities had dumped their wastes and corruptions and acids into it, and now suddenly everyone was aghast that it should have the impertinence to start dying like Lake Erie."



JIM POLING SR.

From Shaman's Rock

It continues:

"The ecology was broken, the renewing forces at last overwhelmed.

"When the sea begins to stink, man better have some fresh green planets to colonize, because this one is going to be used up."

A mystery novel is an unusual place to find strong environmental statements. But MacDonald was a very vocal activist who often slipped environmental comments into his mysteries. He wrote the *Fearful Yellow Eye* criticism of the environment back in

1966, long before most people got onto the Save the Environment campaign.

Much of MacDonald's environmental activism was directed at his adopted state of Florida. He fought dredge-and-fill projects, schemes to change the Everglades and was involved in stopping construction of a huge airport in what is now Florida's Big Cypress Preserve.

Florida is the home of Travis McGee, MacDonald's fictional beach bum salvage consultant who recovers property for people who have had it taken from them by illegal or unscrupulous means.

"I'm a high-level Robin Hood," he says in one book. "I steal from thieves."

McGee appears in 21 of MacDonald's novels and has plenty to say about how overdevelopment is ruining our landscapes, especially in Florida.

In one book he notes: "The rivers and the swamps are dying, the birds are dying, the fish are dying. They're paving the whole state. And the people who give a damn can't be heard."

"The air used to smell like orange blossoms," MacDonald wrote in 1979. "Now when the wind is right, it smells like a robot's armpit."

MacDonald has a lot of say about a lot of things, including the greed and corruption that leads people into making bad decisions. But he doesn't let his (and McGee's) views on the environment, or society's wrongs, get in the way of his mysteries.

His McGee is a hard-boiled investigator with a football player's physique that he uses to get himself out of tough situations.

He's also a thinking man's investigator – a knight in slightly tarnished armour who has a timeless sense of honour and obligation.

He doesn't like the world he sees around him and has retired to his houseboat *The Busted Flush*, which he won in a poker game. He comes out of retirement when he needs money, charging a fee of 50-per-cent of the value of whatever he recovers.

MacDonald began the McGee series with *The Deep Blue Good-By* in 1964, partly as a way of calling attention to the ruining of Florida's natural areas by overdevelopment. He followed that with three more McGee mysteries in the same year.

Fawcett Publications, the American publisher of the paperback McGee mysteries, used to say that it had 32 million McGee books in print. Each title contained a colour to help readers remember which ones they had read.

Good fiction contains important messages, many of which tell us about life. Rarely, however, does crime fiction do this.

MacDonald's McGee books are not just straight ahead mysteries that get solved. They are mystery fiction with something more – observations about the things McGee sees around him. Things that he doesn't like and believes are not good for society.

Other authors and literary critics have credited the McGee series as helping to create a genre of Florida-based fiction based on ecological and social problems brought on by the huge numbers of people moving there.

Stephen King, one of the world's most popular authors, has praised MacDonald as "the great entertainer of our age, and a mesmerizing storyteller."

Economic charter could keep Canada from drowning in debt

THE LATEST economic and fiscal outlook from Canada's Parliamentary Budget Officer (PBO) indicates that the federal deficit will grow more than previously projected, up to \$46.5 billion in the current fiscal year. The PBO also said we'll continue to run deficits for the remainder of this decade.

In fact, according to a recent report by the Fraser Institute, Canada's overall debt is expected to grow by more than \$140 billion over the next five years. That means the government will pay a lot more in interest to service our ballooning national debt, in much the same way that many Canadians are paying more interest today for mortgages, credit lines and car loans.

The question we need to ask is why are we racking up this enormous debt? And why are we still generating massive deficits year after year, especially now that the pandemic is behind us?

If the reason we're running up the debt is to inject a powerful amount of financial stimulus to get our economy going again, it's clearly not working. And if it's not to get our economy working, then what is the government spending all this borrowed money on?

When government spending goes off the rails from time to time, the opposition often vows to restore fiscal sanity and return to balanced budgets. But if the opposition is successful and forms the government, there's nothing that prevents them from continuing to run deficits.

In other words, we have no effective checks on limiting government spending.

Why does this matter?

It matters because fiscal mismanagement directly impacts our standard of living and the living standards of future generations. It can cause inflation, which corrodes the value of our savings and makes consumer staples like food, fuel and clothing more expensive while putting a big dent in consumer spending.

But if we had an Economic Charter of Rights and Responsibilities, which required

the government to pay down debt, balance the budget and reduce spending on overhead, then we would have guardrails in place to keep government from spending recklessly and driving us deeper into debt.

The two key charter responsibilities imposed upon the government, with clear-cut percentages and dates attached, would be the following:

1. Eliminate the debt and balance the budget – a commitment to get our fiscal house in order and reduce our national debt

by five per cent per year for 20 years so that we will be debt-free within two decades.

2. Cut red tape and over-regulation – a commitment to reduce government overhead by 5 percent per year over a ten-year period.

An economic charter of rights and responsibilities would protect the pocketbooks of Canadians by prevent governments from mismanaging

the economic affairs of the nation in much the same way that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms prevents overzealous governments from trampling on the democratic rights of Canadians.

The fact is our country is drowning in debt.

We need to cut spending, return to balanced budgets, and start paying down our debt.

An economic charter of rights and responsibilities is a powerful tool to accomplish that – not just for today, but for generations to come.

To learn more about the economic charter and how it could help Canadians, email me at info@economiccharter.ca. Or to learn more about the economic charter, please visit: www.economiccharter.ca.

Author Bio

Frank Stronach is the founder of Magna International Inc., one of Canada's largest global companies, and was inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame.

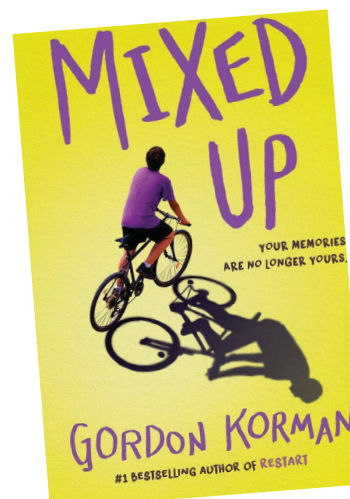
fstronachlpc@gmail.com

FRANK STRONACH

Principles



HCPL's Book of the Week



Reef and Theo don't know what's happening to them. They'll be going about their days and then suddenly they'll have these strange flashes of memory – but the memories don't belong to them. And at the same time, their own memories are starting to ... vanish.

For Reef, this is a big problem, because memories are all he has left of his mom.

For Theo, the memories are a welcome if bizarre distraction from his father's overwhelming future expectations.

Can they figure out why they seem to be swapping memories and put a stop to it before it's too late?

Recommended for ages 8-12, *Mixed Up* by Gordon Korman is available to borrow from the Haliburton County Public Library.

Minden Memories



A snow-clogged Minden main street in front of the drug store and a medical office where Dr. Agnes Jamieson once worked. Photo from the 1940s. Submitted by the Minden Hills Cultural Centre

A blast from the past with the Cultural Centre

by **EMILY STONEHOUSE**
Editor

Photographs are a means of connecting our present day to the past. And with well over a thousand photos in the collection, the Minden Hills Cultural Centre is looking to find ways to showcase these blasts from the past for everyone to see.

That's why Robert Wong, the cultural program coordinator at the Minden Hills Cultural Centre, decided to go through the albums and find pieces that he believed the public would enjoy. "We have a huge collection of photographs here," he said, "and these photos deserve a chance to see some light."

Wong will be supplying weekly photos to the *Minden Times* that feature prominent faces, places, and chapters in Minden history. He noted that many of the images will be seasonal in nature, as he wants to keep them relevant to the current goings-on. "I can

enter keywords into the database, a lot like a Google search, and that will give me images from our collection. This time of year, I searched things like 'hockey' or 'Christmas' to look at some past photos taken this time of year."

The process of sifting through photos has given Wong an opportunity to learn about the community. "I am still new to this community, so going back and seeing these old pictures, it's a great opportunity for me as well," he said.

Wong hopes that people will see the images, and feel a sense of connection, not only to the community as a whole, but to their own stories. He noted that if people have further questions about one of the photos, he can meet up with them, and he may be able to find more photos or artifacts tied to the image; allowing locals to feel that they are tied to the past.

Minden memories will be running weekly in the *Minden Times*.

letters to the editor

Seeking transparency

To The Editor,

In response to Ontario Ombudsman's Investigation into complaints about a closed meeting held by the County of Haliburton on April 27, 2023.

Ontario and its health system continue to be plagued by a lack of transparency and accountability from its public stewards. When Haliburton Highlands Health Services (HHHS) unilaterally announced on April 20, 2023 that it was closing the Minden ER without public consultation, the community was left in the dark with neither rationale nor a reasonable public plan for implementation.

The decision to close the Minden ER appears to have been made in a vacuum and execution proceeded almost immediately. It was a dark time for the community as fear and uncertainty was pervasive.

The Ontario Ombudsman was correct to point out the shortcomings of some of the political process at the County level. As the Ombudsman stated in its report "The open meeting requirements set out in s.239 of the Municipal Act permit the public to observe the political process."

When the County Council chose to enter into closed session, it limited the public's knowledge as well as its ability to participate in that process. Frankly, it was time lost for the community, regardless of Council's intent.

While certain exceptions exist in the Municipal Act, 2001 allowing for closed sessions, reliance on these exceptions should be carefully considered in terms of applicability and whether their use is in the public's best interests. Closed meetings should be a last resort and not a preferred course of action.

The Ontario Ombudsman reported that it has investigated hundreds of closed meetings since 2008 and this only includes those meetings where a complaint was formally initiated.

This is far too many. Ontario municipalities need to do better.

While this report does little to ease the pain of

losing Minden's only Hospital, it does provide a useful reminder to public officials that transparency is not only expected, but it is required. I fully support the recommendations made by the Ombudsman to Haliburton County and I hope that other municipalities will likewise adopt these recommendations into practice.

Despite finding fault in the County's actions in the Ontario Ombudsman's report, what I find even more perplexing from this process, however, is that the Ontario Ombudsman does not have authority to review complaints about hospitals themselves. Instead, complainants are referred back to the hospital and/or to a Patient Ombudsman process that generally reviews claims relating to patient care or patient experiences.

I do not think that it is well appreciated by Ontarians that unlike the Ontario Ombudsman which is an independent officer of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, the Patient Ombudsman's office is under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Health through its advisory agency. I find it hard to believe that this structure is able to maintain the impartiality and level of transparency that is required in the role of ombudsman.

The inevitable result in my opinion is that it enables sometimes self-appointed Boards of Directors to manage public assets - like HHHS - under a veil of secrecy without the transparency or accountability that one would expect from public stewards. In the case of HHHS, even repeated calls for a Board Chair to step down seem to have been ignored.

The Ontario public needs to ask "why?" before it is too late to salvage our struggling healthcare system - And without a doubt, our healthcare system is struggling. The Ontario Health Coalition released a report on Tuesday, December 5th that found a total of 1,200 temporary or permanent closures across Ontario occurred in 2023.

This is far too many. Ontario needs to do better.

Richard Bradley
Minden Hills

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TOPS: Take Off Pounds Sensibly

When: Monday mornings 9:30 to 11 a.m.
Where: Haliburton Legion Branch 129, upper level
Admission: Yearly membership of \$59
A non-profit/commercial network of weight-loss support groups, offers programs for healthy living and weight management.

Tickets Available for the 2024 Cash Calendar

When: Now until sold out
Where: Multiple Locations- See Description
The Haliburton and District Lions Club is now selling tickets for their 2024 Super Cash Calendar. Three draws happen the second Monday of every month from January 8th to October 14th 2024. Visit www.haliburtonlions.com for a list of ticket locations and for more information.

Contract Bridge

When: Every Tuesday, 9am - 12pm
Where: Minden United Church basement, 21 Newcastle Street
Our weekly contract bridge has resumed. New members welcome. All levels of skill welcomed.

Community Christmas Dinner- Free to All

When: Dec. 16, 1 to 5 p.m.
Where: Kinmount Legion (upstairs), 5074 Cty Rd 503
The Kinmount Legion and Ladies Auxiliary invite you to join them for a free Christmas dinner. Please bring donations for the Kinmount food bank. Do you know a senior or someone who cannot get out or does not drive who would appreciate a dinner with all the trimmings? Please give us their name so we can deliver a meal to them on Sunday December 17, 2023. Contact Christine Ferren at 705-928-7447.

Minden Legion Branch 636

Lunch - Monday to Friday
Monday: Rug Hookers every second week. Bid Euchre 1 to 3 p.m.
Tuesday: Food 5 p.m. Canoe FM Bingo 6 p.m.
Thursday: Cribbage 1 to 3 p.m.,
Darts 7 to 9 p.m. and Euchre 7 to 9 p.m.
Every other Friday: Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Friday Fish & Chips & Wings. Lunch 11a.m. to 2 p.m. and Dinner 4 to 7 p.m.
Every other Friday Karaoke 8 to 11 p.m.
Saturday All Day Breakfast 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with three Meat draws at 11 a.m.
Call ahead any day for take-out: 705-286-4541

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letters to the editor

Halt the CT Scanner funding

To the Editor,

We are writing to express our concerns regarding the proposed investment of \$1,000,000 from Haliburton County taxpayer funds to support the purchase of a CT Scanner and mammogram machine for Haliburton Highlands Health Services. We question the validity of the "facts" as they have been presented by HHHS to the county.

We believe it is crucial to have full transparency and access to factual information regarding how this significant investment will directly improve nurse and doctor attraction and retention in our community. We kindly request detailed documentation outlining the anticipated benefits and the specific ways in which this investment will address the challenges of attracting and retaining health-care professionals.

We also seek clarification on the exact hours of operation for the CT Scanner and monogram machine. Knowing the operational schedule will help us assess the true impact on patient care and accessibility.

Additionally, we would ask for a factual and comprehensive analysis of the anticipated cost savings that this investment is expected to generate for Haliburton County. It is essential to understand the long-term financial implications and the potential return on investment for the entire region, including Minden.

In light of the above concerns, we respectfully request an immediate halt to the allocation of funds for this project until a transparent and evidence-based explanation is provided to the public. We strongly believe that an open and inclusive decision-making process is crucial when investing public funds.

HHHS continues to operate matters of strategy and finance in virtual secrecy, yet they seem to expect blind acceptance and an open door to municipal tax dollars without accountability. Will the County of Haliburton hold firm on the requirement of HHHS to provide 2 seats on the executive board? If the answer is yes, you should still approach cautiously. If the answer is no, send a clear message...no seats, no money! Anything other, would be blind acceptance and encouragement for irresponsible and self-serving board behaviour.

We look forward to receiving a prompt response to our request for transparency and detailed information regarding this investment. Our community deserves a thorough understanding of the potential benefits, costs, and implications of this decision.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

**Patrick Porzuczek and
Re Open The Minden ER,
Minden Hills**

Council should reverse decision

To the Editor,

The December 5th *Echo* featured a news item, and three opinion pieces ... an editorial, a column and a lengthy, detailed "Letter to the Editor" regarding Dysart et al's rejection of the recommendations of the cultural resource committee concerning a proposed name change to Sam Slick Park. The latter three of these voiced serious displeasure over a decision that should have been a very, very easy administrative correction. The December 6th *Minden Times* included an editorial with the same stance: in disagreement with the council decision.

The members of the Dysart et al Council put their names forward last year to represent the citizens of the municipality. To listen, to consult, to gather and analyze appropriate data.... to responsibly lead. The majority of our citizens take pride in this municipality and have done their part: they elected council, they pay their taxes, they obey the laws. Many of them contribute to the vibrant fabric of the community with significant donations of time and money. In return, they expect their municipal council to advocate on their behalf.... to be bold, to be creative and, again, to listen. A timely reversal of this error is undeniably in order.

**Sean Pennylegion
Haliburton**

Council needs to do better

To the Editor,

Re: Editorial – Know better. Do better – Dec. 6, 2023

This editorial calling Dysart et al council to task for reversing a previous council decision to re-name Sam Slick Park in Haliburton village, was well thought-out and very timely. It nailed it!

There is absolutely no justification for continuing with the name. It is also a slap in the face to the high school students who originally suggested the name change.

Hopefully Dysart council has had time to re-think their decision.

**Sharon Lynch
Haliburton**

Concerned over curriculum

To the Editor,

Know better, do better, as described by editor Emily Stonehouse is a thought provoking article, but are people really learning from the past? If this were true, then the Ontario Curriculum, as it is, would simply not be allowed. Partially written by Benjamin Levin, a convicted sex offender, this is the individual who is at the root of the curriculum currently, to which a group of parents and grandparents are opposed. This is not a hateful group but a concerned group of protective adults who see the curriculum as harmful to children.

**Lois Foster,
Algonquin Highlands**



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Paws for a cause

On Dec. 10, Dr. Jenn from the Minden Animal Hospital donated money and a new box of toys to the Minden Community Food Centre from their nail trim fundraiser. They raised \$230, and Dr. Jenn matched the donations, making it \$460 in total.
/Photo submitted



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‘Tis the season for gifting gadgets

WITH THE arrival of the gift giving season, many of us may be considering buying some kind of technology for our loved ones. According to Statistics Canada, in December 2017, Canadians purchased \$444.7 million in televisions and home audiovisual equipment, and \$464.4 million in computers and related equipment. Large retailers like Apple, Amazon, Walmart, and Costco earn billions of dollars in what analysts refer to as the “holiday quarter” – the last four months of the year which include pre-Christmas sales like Black Friday and Cyber Monday, as well as post-Christmas sales such as those during the week of Boxing Day. In Canada during 2021, consumer electronics made up approximately 28 per cent of online sales.

In the United States, \$173 billion worth of purchased items are expected to be returned during the holiday rush. Of those returns, stores will either stock and resell the items, sell those items to a liquidator for auction, or simply send those items to be recycled or to a landfill. All of these options have an environmental impact, whether it’s the fuel and emissions involved in the manufacture, creation, and moving of that item,

the resources used to recycle that item, or the chemicals and by-products created as that item degrades in a landfill. E-waste is a growing problem in Canada and, according to a study from the University of Waterloo, is expected to reach 1.2 million tonnes annually by 2030.

This isn’t to scare you away from buying your loved ones technology for Christmas. Rather, we should be realistic about how our consumer choices impact the world around us and be mindful of those impacts while making purchases. Here are a few things you might want to think

about when buying that gadget that can help lessen the impact of your purchase, save money and time, and hopefully result in a welcome gift to a loved one.

Spoil the Surprise!

This might seem counter-intuitive when it comes to gift giving, but it can result in a happier gift recipient and avoid having to make a return. Talk to your intended recipient about their prospective gift before you purchase. The last thing you want is to get Grandma an iPad that gets used once and then never again because she didn’t want it

in the first place. How we use technology is quite personal to our day-to-day lives, and we can only really glean that from having some conversations. The more you talk with someone before you buy them a gadget of some kind, the more you can appreciate how they use technology, and what they feel their needs are. The gift not being a surprise will be secondary to the gift being exactly what the person needed.

Consider buying used

There are people who buy new gadgets on a regular cycle so they have the newest thing, but often used electronics can be found that are appropriate for the user and in good condition for a reasonable price. Many retailers carry used models that have been refurbished, and offer a guarantee that those models work within reasonable expectations. Refurbished models might not perform as well as new models, but if the person you are buying for is a fairly light user, refurbished may be a good option. The trick with buying used technology is to balance the expected lifespan of the item with the cost. If you do buy used, stick to purchasing from reputable retailers or from people you know you can trust. Buying used helps to divert technology from the landfill for at least a little while anyway.

Subsidize an already planned purchase

Technology purchases are generally big purchases, so if you know your loved one is already planning on buying something, just contribute to the cause! Give a gift card for the retailer they are planning on purchasing from or put some cash in a greeting card. This way, you’ll know that whatever they get is what they want, and that you eased the impact their purchase would have on their wallet. Contributing some money to their technology purchase could also allow them to purchase a better model than they could before.

Technology is a part of our lives, but technology purchases have a greater impact that we don’t always think about. While we can’t eliminate that impact entirely – and while corporations certainly need to do more to make the production of technology sustainable – we can work to limit our impact, especially over the holidays when technology purchasing, and the resulting flood of returns are at their peak. And if you do find yourself buying or returning something to a retailer this holiday season, be sure to remember the human toll of our spending habits and be kind to the people behind the counter.



ERIN KERNOHAN-BERNING
Humans and Technology

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	2		1		5			
1					6	8		
		3						
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	9					2		

Level: Advanced

Fun By The Numbers

Like puzzles? Then you'll love sudoku. This mind-bending puzzle will have you hooked from the moment you square off, so sharpen your pencil and put your sudoku savvy to the test!

Here's How It Works:

Sudoku puzzles are formatted as a 9x9 grid, broken down into nine 3x3 boxes. To solve a sudoku, the numbers 1 through 9 must fill each row, column and box. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and box. You can figure out the order in which the numbers will appear by using the numeric clues already provided in the boxes. The more numbers you name, the easier it gets to solve the puzzle!

Answers on page 12



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Duchene celebrates 1,000 games

by EMILY STONEHOUSE
Editor

Matt Duchene has officially played 1000 games in the NHL, and with that milestone, he has taken the time to reflect on how he got to where he is. “Being from Haliburton has been a huge contributor to me making the NHL, and then getting to 1000 games,” he said to the *Times*. “I’m grateful to be from there for so many reasons.”

The 32-year old from Haliburton was drafted third overall to the Colorado Avalanche in 2009, and made his mark in the NHL right off the bat. After eight years, Duchene was traded to the Ottawa Senators followed by the Columbus Blue Jackets briefly, before settling in Nashville between 2019 to 2023.

He played his 1000th game wearing a Dallas Stars jersey, where he landed in July of this year. And while Duchene is happy to be where he is, he can’t help but look back on how far he’s come. “Haliburton is such a hockey crazy town,” he laughed. “Without my friends and family and our great community, I wouldn’t be where I am today.”



Matt Duchene celebrates his 1000th NHL game on Dec. 8 with the Dallas Stars. Duchene celebrates with his wife, Ashley, and his son Beau. /Photo submitted



Party against the Panthers

The Huskies played a nail biter against the Pickering Panthers on home ice on Dec. 9. Their next home game is against the North York Rangers on Dec. 16. /TIM YANO special to the *Times*



The Huskies stand while Ella Gooley sings *O Canada* before their home game against the Pickering Panthers on Saturday, Dec. 9. The Huskies won the game 3-2.



HHSS drama club presents *Clue*

by VIVIAN COLLINGS
Times Staff

Who committed the crimes? Haliburton Highlands Secondary School's drama club has a *Clue*.

The school's drama club has been working hard since the beginning of October on their production of the classic whodunnit comedy, and are ready to share it with the community starting on Friday, Dec. 15.

Rebeka Borgdorff, HHSS teacher and drama club director, knew the club would be most excited about another comedy after the success of their first play, *Star-Crossed Hattrick*, last year.

"We wanted to pick something familiar enough to the students that would be comical and exciting. Instead of choosing a holiday story, we'll dress up the *Clue* manor with festive decorations," she said.

In addition to the play, there will also be a dinner theatre put before each performance by an ensemble cast.

"We were so excited to have had so many students audition that we wanted to make sure everyone had the chance to perform," she said. "We have mostly seniors in the play and mostly students from Grades 9 and 10 in the ensemble."

HHSS student Annabelle Borgdorff has been involved in the new drama club since it was formed last year.

"I had so much fun with last year's play, so I wanted to have this experience again," Annabelle said. "I also really just love the people that I get to connect with through drama that I maybe wouldn't spend time with otherwise."

Annabelle highlighted the new connections made with Ctrl-Art-Del, a local youth theatre company, and Highlands Summer Festival through participation in the drama club.

"I love the friendships made within the school as well as the connections to theatre groups in our town," she said. "It is really rewarding because it will give me more opportunities



Haliburton Highlands Secondary School drama club members have been rehearsing their new production, *Clue*, for the past two months. /VIVIAN COLLINGS Staff

for performing in the future."

Annabelle will be playing the role of Ms. Wadsworth, the butler of the manor.

"I really just love performing and being on stage. I love that performances make me happy because I get the joy of performing, but it also makes those who get to watch happy too," she said.

As an added bonus to students in the school, the dinner theatre portion is a fundraiser for HHSS' 2025 Europe Trip.

All performances will take place at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion.

On Friday, Dec. 15 and Saturday, Dec. 16, dinner theatre begins at 6 p.m. and *Clue* begins at 7 p.m.

The matinee on Sunday, Dec. 17 begins with dinner theatre at 12:30 p.m. and the show at 1:30 p.m.

Tickets can be purchased here: docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScCax72SCQ8GZv5DXvFJHWIBhu_bhhYH6h69JS_BCsLcQNGSg/viewform.

Imagination comes alive

Heritage Ballet's annual production of *The Nutcracker*, performed by youth dancers and adult cast members, took place on Saturday, Dec. 9 and Sunday, Dec. 10 at the Northern Lights Performing Arts Pavilion to nearly sold out audiences. /TIM YANO Special to the *Times*



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9	1	5	6	8	2	3	4	7
4	8	2	3	1	7	5	6	9
2	3	6	4	5	1	9	7	8
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Friends stick together during a cold plunge at Twelve Mile Lake on Dec. 10. The activity is designed to assist with circulation and muscle development. /ADAM FRISK special to the Times

Taking the Plunge
While swimming in December may not be for everyone, a group of dedicated swimmers took the plunge on Dec. 11 in Carnarvon.



The community cold plunge was coordinated by Fort Treehouse Co., and saw many individuals eager to take a dip. Pictured, Nick Folco wades out of the water after his swim.

Sir Sam’s kicks off 23/24 season

by VIVIAN COLLINGS
Times Staff

Skiers and boarders hit the slopes in Eagle Lake for the first time this season on Saturday.

Although only three runs were open, avid alpiners headed to Sir Sam’s and suited up for a ride down Cash Register and Easy Street.

Others stayed warm in the chalet for food and drinks at the Eagle View Restaurant, or popped in to get their season’s pass photo taken.

“We’re excited to be open this early again this year,” said owner Doug Wilkinson. “We’ve been making snow for a few weeks now, and it’s been successful thanks to the cooperation of the weather.”

Next Saturday, Dec. 16, a tree lighting ceremony and live music by the PriMates will help kick off the season as a fundraiser for the Heat Bank starting at 6 p.m.

The hill will have 6-7 runs open.

Visit www.sirsams.ca/event-details/christmas-tree-lighting-ceremony for more information.



Ski Patrollers were on the slopes practicing rescue drills on Saturday.



A family speeds down Easy Street on Sir Sam's opening day on Saturday, Dec. 9. /VIVIAN COLLINGS Staff



Local artisans showcased their work in Kinmount as a part of their Christmas in the Village market.



A Kinmount Christmas
A model train set is set up at the Kinmount Train Station to showcase the streets of the community from the early train days. /TIM YANO special to the Times



Santa Claus came to Kinmount on Dec. 9 as a part of their Christmas in the Village.

Holiday Recycling

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Minden Waste Disposal Site Holiday Hours

Christmas Day - December 25, 2023
All Waste Disposal Sites Closed

Boxing Day - December 26, 2023
All Waste Disposal Sites operate on regular winter hours.

New Year's Day - January 1, 2024
All Waste Disposal Sites Closed

New Waste Disposal Site Hours start January 1, 2024

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THE TOWNSHIP OF MINDEN HILLS

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PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills has received applications to consider by-laws to stop up, close, and convey those parcels of land more particularly described as follows:

- File No. PLSRA2022067:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of South Lake, lying in front of 1020 Capricorn Court located within Lot 4, Concession 14, Geographic Township of Snowdon
- File No. PLSRA2022080:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of South Lake, lying in front of 1161 Kendrick Creek Lane located within Lot 2, Concession 13, Geographic Township of Snowdon
- File No. PLSRA2022083:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Kashagawigamog Lake, lying in front of 1058 Voyager Drive located within Lot 26, Concession 5, Geographic Township of Minden
- File No. PLSRA2023038:** Part of the original shore road allowance along the shore of Pigeon Lake, lying in front of 3420 Deep Bay Road located within Lot 11, Concession 13, Geographic Township of Lutterworth

The above noted applications are available for inspection in the Building and Planning Department located at 7 Milne Street, Minden, Ontario by appointment only. Additional information may be obtained by contacting the undersigned.

AND TAKE NOTICE should you wish to provide comments with respect to any of the above referenced applications, please submit in writing those comments to the undersigned not later than **January 12, 2024**.

AND FURTHER TAKE NOTICE any person who claims that their land will be prejudicially affected is asked to contact the undersigned at their earliest convenience.

AND TAKE FURTHER NOTICE if deemed advisable, By-laws giving effect to the proposed closure and conveyance will be passed by the Council for the Corporation of the Township of Minden Hills. Please note that a Council meeting to consider a By-law for the above referenced applications will be scheduled at a later date following the requisite commenting period.

Amanda Dougherty, B.A. (Hons)
Manager of Planning, Township of Minden Hills
705-286-1260 Ext. 506
adougherty@mindenhills.ca

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290 PERSONALS

Dearest Saint Rita,
It is with sincere thankfulness and confidence that I bless you and thank you for your intercession. Your power over the hopeless has given us everything. Continued devotion to you and the Sacred Heart and thanks to all who have helped. L.E.M.

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435 VOLUNTEERS

The Minden Community Food Centre, your local charity that works to reduce food insecurity in the surrounding areas, is seeking new volunteers to join our Board of Directors. We are looking for a compassionate person with strong communications skills and a supportive team player to help us achieve our mandate to provide supplemental, healthy foods for our clients living in Minden Hills. If you have skills, time, and experience in any of the following management disciplines: general administration, financial, asset campaign, or social media, plus the desire to help, we would like to hear from you by January 5 2024. Please contact us by e-mail and tell us about your interests in food insecurities, program ideas to support our mandate, your background, skill set, and experience. Send your e-mail to mcfc.BoardMembers@gmail.com.



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We look forward to hearing from interested applicants by **6pm Monday, December 18, 2023**
to

Melanie Klodt Wong, Executive Director
HHHS Foundation, mklodtwong@hhhs.ca

Please visit hhhs.ca/about/careers
for the full job posting and
hhhs.ca/foundation to learn more
about the HHHS Foundation.

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530 RETIREMENT

Happy Retirement

Please join the HHHS Foundation team in wishing
Carol Simmons
all the best in retirement!



After 13 years of phone calls, donations, bears, memorial cards and 50/50 tickets... Carol has decided it is time for the next chapter.

We will miss the laughter and expertise she shares so willingly and hope that she takes time to enjoy her hobbies and her dedication to the Irondale community.

Thank you, Carol, for your years of service, hard work, and commitment to raising funds for the health of our community. May your retirement be filled with joy, relaxation, and new adventures.

With gratitude and fondness from the Foundation and HHHS teams.



540 COMING EVENTS

Tickets available at the
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570 NOTICES

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that on behalf of Felice Mueller application will be made to the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario for an Act to revive Qui Vive Island Club Inc. the Qui Vive Island Club Inc. Act 2023. The application may be considered by the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs. Any person who has an interest in the application and who wishes to make submissions, for or against the application, to the Standing Committee on Procedure and House Affairs should notify, in writing, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, Legislative Building, Queen's Park, Toronto, Ontario, M7A 1A2. Dated at Portland, Oregon, USA, this 23rd day of November, 2023. FELICE MUELLER

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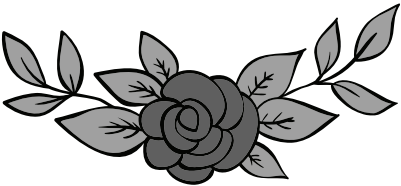
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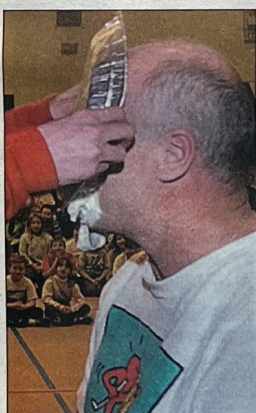
LOOK INSIDE



Slain officers honoured

Thirty-five years after two
police officers were mur-
dered at South Lake, a
plaque is dedicated in their
honour at Minden OPP.

See page 3



Pie-back time

ASES's top magazine
seller gets to make prin-
cipal enjoy a taste of pie

See page 10

In Quotes

"Please, Bill, don't do any-
thing you'll be sorry for."

**Lorne Chapitis's last
words before he was shot**

Four companies bid for municipal office

Quotes range from
\$1.5- to \$2-million

by **MATTHEW WALLS**
Times staff

The fate of the proposed munici-
pal office for Minden Hills could be
determined by council within the
next few weeks.

Last Wednesday, Minden Hills
council opened four building ten-

ders for the office, with figures
ranging from \$1.5 million to
close to \$2 million.

Council will not make any
decisions until they read the
report on the tenders being pre-
pared by architect Duncan Ross,
CAO Gerry Morrison and Envi-
ronmental and Property Opera-
tions Manager Bob Romberg.

Reeve Ross Rigney said coun-
cil will look at the report and the
documents at its first meeting on

Thursday, and will likely then set
a meeting to discuss the tenders.

Rigney and councillors Peter
Oyler, Cheryl Murdoch and Ron
Buchanan attended the tenders'
opening.

Oyler said he thinks the lower
figures "probably are attainable"
for council.

The tenders were received
after council made a second call
for building tenders on
September 25th, after the first

call drew only just one response.

For this tender, the proposed
building site was the Minden
Curling Club's parking lot.

While the Curling Club has not
publicly opposed the proposal,
the club's executive is said to be
split on the issue and several
months ago the executive sent a
letter to council stating their
reservations. One of the execu-
tive members, Cheryl Murdoch,

see COUNCIL page 16



Christmas in Carnarvon

Ladies from the Lochlin United Church were among those who par-
ticipated in the Christmas in Carnarvon celebrations. The ladies,

including Marilyn Marks, Lois Rigney (behind), Yvonne Newell, Linda
Catenazzi and Janice Shaw, left to right, entertained by performing a
skit.

Weather to blame for power outages: Hydro

by **JERRY GROZELLE**
& **MARTHA PERKINS**
Times staff

Mother Nature is being blamed
for power outages that we have
experienced in Haliburton
County over the past several
weeks. A combination of factors

has caused problems, says Ken
Casey, Union Trade Supervisor
with Hydro One in Minden.

High winds have not only con-
tributed to trees being blown
down across hydro lines, they
also played havoc with some old
copper wires.

Casey said that copper is vul-
nerable to vibrations caused by
high winds. That is what caused
an outage in Haliburton County
last Tuesday evening. The copper
line snapped at the corner of
Highway 35 and the north junc-
tion of County Road 121 near the

Corner Store at just after 7 p.m.
on December 2. The break in the
line affected three power stations
— Minden, Kinmount and Gull
River (on the Deep Bay Road).

When the line broke, it slipped

see WET GROUND page 2

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